Improving the quality of Doordarshan News

3137. DR.Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the quality of doordarshan news and infrastructure continue to be very poor ; and

(b) if so, the measures proposed to improve the contents at least ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Even though quality of doordarshan news and infrastructure is not poor, efforts to further impove these are made continuously. Doordarshan continues to upgrade technology relating to programme production and telecasting. It upgrades and replaces equipment in studios, constructs new studios and similarly upgrades and replaces old transmitters on a continuing basis. It also installs some new transmitters every year to increase coverage.

Coverage of J and K Doordarshan Kendras

3138. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the reach of Doordarshan by this year-end ;

(b) whether doordarshan has been affected by the mushrooming of satellite channels in the recent past;

(c) whether it is a fact that some border areas of Jammu and Kashmir can view only Pakistan Television ; and

(d) if so, what remedial steps have been taken by Government to increase the range and coverage of Jammu and Kashmir Doordarshan Kendras in this reagards ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITELY) : (a) By the year end the reach of Doordarshan is estimated to cover approximately 88.5% of the population of the country.

(b) doordarshan viewership had been affected to a certain extent in major cities because of a competition from satellite channels. However, due to the changes made in the content and presentation of programmes to suit the interest of the viewers, in recent months, the viewership figures are on the rise.

(c) and (d) Pakistan TV programmes are available in certain border areas of Jammu and Kashmir. For. expansion of Doordarshan coverage in the State, a special plan involving an outlay of Rs. 218 crores is under implementation. Under this special plan, Doordarshan coverage is expected to extend to about 95% of the population of the State over the next two years.

More Educational Programmes in DD

3139. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the programmes in Doordarshan are film or entertainment based ;

(b) if whether Government propose to take steps to change this scenario in order to educate people through this powerful media;

(c) whether Government will also take steps to monitor Doordarshan channels as well as private channels to improve the standard of their telecasting; and

(d) whether Governmemt will increase the time allotted for the educational programmes, particularly for the improvement of standards in the field of science and technology ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) and (b) Doordarshan, being a Public Service Broadcaster, caters to the needs of all the target audiences to create healthy and informed society by airing programmes of different genres and subject covering *inter alia,* education, information and entertainment. It has been intimated by Prasar Bharati that films and film based programmes account for only 10-12% of the total transmission time on Doordarshan.

(c) It is the constant endeavour of Prasar Bharti to bring about qualitative improvement in Doordarshan programmes to sustain viewer's interest.